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CONGRESSMAN
TONY HALL NEWS

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114 HOUSE MEMBERS EXPRESS CONCERN OVER REPORTS OF ARRESTS AND TORTURE FOLLOWING POPE'S VISIT TO EAST TIMOR

WASHINGTON—A bipartisan group of 114 House members have signed a letter organized by Rep. Tony P. Hall (D-Ohio) to Secretary of State James A. Baker III stating they are "deeply disturbed" at reports of arrests and torture of demonstrators in East Timor following Pope John Paul's visit there on October 12, 1989.

The lawmakers told Baker they feared that torture to extract confessions from the demonstrators "would fall into a well-established pattern in East Timor and throughout Indonesia of mistreatment and abuse of detainees in the period immediately following arrest."

The letter called on Baker to ask the U.S. embassy in Jakarta to "investigate the events surrounding the demonstration and its aftermath" and to urge that doctors selected by the families be allowed to examine the detainees.

East Timor, a predominantly Roman Catholic former Portuguese colony, was invaded and occupied by Indonesia in 1975. At least 100,000 East Timorese out of an original population of less than 700,000 have perished as a result of the Indonesian occupation.

Pope John Paul's October 12 stop in East Timor marked the first visit to the territory by a world leader since the Indonesian invasion. While there, the Pontiff spoke out strongly on human rights. John Paul's final Mass in East Timor was followed by a demonstration at which nationalists shouted slogans praising the Pope and demanding independence. According to eyewitnesses, arrests ensued.

Hall said, "It appears that international humanitarian organizations are encountering difficulties in obtaining access to detainees in East Timor in the aftermath of the Papal visit. The United States should make it clear to the Indonesians that there is strong Congressional concern over this development as well as the reported arrests. Furthermore, human rights monitoring groups should be allowed to freely visit the territory."

"Recent history shows that the worse abuses in East Timor have taken place precisely when international observers have been forced to the sidelines," he added.

Hall also said, "Our interest extends to others who may have been arrested or abused following the initial reports of 40 arrests after the papal visit. We are going to do everything we can to reiterate our concerns over these and other matters, especially the difficulties international humanitarian organizations are facing in gaining access to detainees."

-more-

ADD ONE
EAST TIMOR

For the last ten years, Hall has been the leader in Congress calling for improved human rights conditions in East Timor.

The text of the letter follows.

Dear Secretary Baker:

We are deeply disturbed at reports of arrests in East Timor following Pope John Paul's visit there on October 12, 1989. As you know, the final Mass was followed by a demonstration in which nationalists shouted slogans.

We understand from Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo and other sources that as many as 40 people may have been detained, many of whom have now been released. At least five others have reportedly taken refuge in the Bishop's home.

We are concerned about reports that several of those arrested were tortured to extract "confessions." While such reports are difficult to verify, they would fall into a well-established pattern in East Timor and throughout Indonesia of mistreatment and abuse of detainees in the period immediately following arrest.

Close international monitoring can help prevent further abuse, and we urge you to ask our embassy in Jakarta to investigate events surrounding the demonstration and its aftermath. In particular, we ask that the United States officially inquire about the names of all those arrested after the demonstration, the place of detention for those still in custody, and the charges against them. We also ask the embassy to urge that families be permitted to have a doctor of their choice examine the detainees.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Tony P. Hall, M.C.
Henry J. Hyde, M.C.
Dante B. Fascell, M.C.
John Edward Porter, M.C.
Tom Lantos, M.C.
Frank R. Wolf, M.C.
Douglas H. Bosco, M.C.
Constance A. Morella, M.C.
Chester G. Atkins, M.C.
Frank Horton, M.C.
Ronald V. Dellums, M.C.
David E. Bonior, M.C.
Peter A. DeFazio, M.C.
Matthew F. McHugh, M.C.
John Joseph Moakley, M.C.
Vic Fazio, M.C.
Timothy J. Penny, M.C.
Edolphus Towns, M.C.
Charles Rose, M.C.
Michael R. McNulty, M.C.
Ben Nighthorse Campbell, M.C.
Barney Frank, M.C.
John Conyers, Jr., M.C.
Don Edwards, M.C.
Richard E. Neal, M.C.
Bruce A. Morrison, M.C.
Walter E. Fauntroy, M.C.
Jaime B. Fuster, M.C.
Daniel K. Akaka, M.C.
Frank Pallone, Jr., M.C.
Julian C. Dixon, M.C.
Byron L. Dorgan, M.C.
Gerry Sikorski, M.C.
Norman Y. Mineta, M.C.
Douglas Applegate, M.C.
Charles Wilson, M.C.
Nancy Pelosi, M.C.
Patricia Schroeder, M.C.
Donald M. Payne, M.C.
Robert J. Mrazek, M.C.
Thomas M. Foglietta, M.C.
James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Robert T. Matsui, M.C.
Robert A. Roe, M.C.
Donald J. Pease, M.C.
Lee H. Hamilton, M.C.
James H. Scheuer, M.C.
Christopher H. Smith, M.C.
Jim Jontz, M.C.
Ronald K. Machtley, M.C.
Mike Espy, M.C.
Mervyn M. Dymally, M.C.
Albert G. Bustamante, M.C.
Barbara Boxer, M.C.
Amo Houghton, M.C.
Major R. Owens, M.C.
Robert W. Kastenmeier, M.C.
Leon E. Panetta, M.C.
John Bryant, M.C.
Peter H. Kostmayer. M.C.
Sander M. Levin, M.C.
Thomas J. Manton, M.C.
Edward J. Markey, M.C.
Ted Weiss, M.C.
Austin J. Murphy, M.C.
Pat Williams, M.C.
Thomas J. Tauke, M.C.
Al Swift, M.C.
Bruce F. Vento, M.C.
Silvio O. Conte, M.C.
William J. Coyne, M.C.
Gus Yatron, M.C.
James A. Traficant, M.C.
Howard L. Berman, M.C.
Bill Richardson, M.C.
Jim Moody, M.C.
Charlie A. Hayes, M.C.
John Spratt, M.C.
Henry A. Waxman, M.C.
Edward F. Feighan, M.C.
Sherwood Boehlert, M.C.
Jim Bates, M.C.
Claudine Schneider, M.C.
John Miller, M.C.
H. Martin Lancaster, M.C.
Ron Wyden, M.C.
David R. Nagle, M.C.
Harold E. Ford, M.C.
Gary L. Ackerman, M.C.
Fortney Pete Stark, M.C.
Howard Wolpe, M.C.
Bob McEwen, M.C.
Bill Nelson, M.C.
C. Thomas McMillen, M.C.
Bill Green, M.C.
Ronald D. Coleman, M.C.
Dan Glickman, M.C.
Gerald D. Kleczka, M.C.
Tim Johnson, M.C.
Mike Synar, M.C.
Frank McCloskey, M.C.
Joseph P. Kennedy II. M.C.
Wayne Owens, M.C.
Herbert H. Bateman, M.C.
Stephen L. Neal, M.C.
Ike Skelton, M.C.
Steny H. Hoyer, M.C.
Benjamin A. Gilman, M.C.
Jim Cooper, M.C.
Tim Valentine, M.C.
John R. Kasich, M.C.
Doug Walgren
Gerry E. Studds, M.C.
Curt Weldon, M.C.

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